1978 & 1979 respectively. At present no irrigation project benefitting Bilaspur District is pending clearance at the Centre.

(b) Two projects namely Arpa & Kelo benefitting Bilaspur District have been sent back to the State Government in May. 96 and November. 96 respectively due to non-compliance of the observations of Central Appraising Agencies by the State Government for more than one year.

(c) The State Government is required to submit modified project reports after compliance of the observations and obtain environment/forests/ rehabilitation & resettlement plans clearances. Though there is prescribed time limit for appraisal of the projects, the clearance is delayed due to the delay by the State Governments in complying with the observations of various Central Appraising Agencies.

(d) The details of amounts spent and scheduled date of completion of the ongoing major and medium irrigation projects are as under :

(Rupees in crores)

S. No.	Name of Project	Latest Estimated Cost	Expenditure upto March 1995	Schedule of Completion
1.	Hasdeo Right Bank Canal	13.39	13.39	Completed
2.	Hasdeo Bango	858.31	486.23	Beyond VIII Plan
3.	Ghonga	6.73	6.73	Completed
4.	Bilaspur Diversion	6.30	0.81	Beyond VIII Plan
5.	Arpa	265.71	4.18	Unapproved Project
6.	Kelo	92.45	-	-do-

[English]

Issue of Passports

1325. SHRIMATI BHAVNA BEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA :
SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR :
SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH :
SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is considerable delay in issuing Passports by the Passport Offices due to lack of sufficient staff and other reasons;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial steps taken/being taken in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b). There are a number of factors responsible for delay in issuing passports. Lack of sufficient staff is, however, not a major factor. The principal factors for delay are :

(i) receipt of negative or incomplete police reports by Passport Offices.

(ii) Discrepancies/deficiencies in documents submitted by applicants.

(iii) Lack of response on time from applicants who are asked to submit additional documents.

(c) Remedial measures being undertaken are :

(i) Temporary additional staff is at once provided to passport offices whenever any exceptional increase in pendency is noticed.

(ii) Opening of new Passport Offices in Ghaziabad, Pune, Thane and Vihakhapatnam and Collection Centres at Madurai, Surat, Gurgaon, Vijaywada and Shillong.

(iii) Automatic re-issue of passport for 10 years or 20 years at the option of the applicant without police verification after expiry.

(iv) Expansion of the list of officers authorised to issue Verification Certificates to include General Managers and above in Public Sector Undertakings of the Government of India and officers of the rank of Colonel and above in the Army and their equivalents in the Navy and Air Force.

(v) Acceptance of photocopied passport application forms to eliminate long queues which lead to harassment of applicants.

(vi) Setting up of Passport Advisory Committees.

(vii) Monitoring Cell headed by a Public Relations Officer directly under the charge of Chief Passport Officer set up in CPO Headquarters for speedy redressal of complaints.

Miss World Pageant

1326. PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been a lot of protests against the Miss World Pageant at Bangalore;

(b) if so, the details and reasons therefor; and

(c) the Government's reaction thereto?